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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF RUSSIAN IDIOMS

By

MONIKA MAXA

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **MASTER OF ARTS.**

IN

SLAVIC LINGUISTICS

DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF RUSSIAN IDIOMS** here submitted by **MONIKA MAXA** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **MASTER OF ARTS** in **SLAVIC LINGUISTICS.**

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the pragmatic nature of idioms. Its purpose is to attempt to explicate the nature of idioms, specifically phraseological units, using Russian examples, in the framework of an examination of metaphor and knowledge structures. First, some attention is given to the phrase structure of idioms, since it is a necessary component in determining and defining what an idiom is, especially according to the views of members of the Russian school used here (Molotkov, Šmelov, and others). Phraseological types are examined, as well as various syntactic types, according to the grammatical functions they perform. Second, it is argued that metaphor is important and relevant to the study of idioms, since the original and literal meaning of an idiom has been metaphorically transposed, and the use of an idiom involves cognitive and perceptual processes that are metaphorically based. These processes occur in the form of conceptual associations which accompany the idiomatic metaphor. The treatment and explication of metaphor here is also concerned with pragmatics. Third, some attention is also given to the importance of context as this factor influences the emergence and subsequent use of idioms, paralleling certain knowledge schemas (Schank and Abelson). These schemata are aggregated through experience and stored in memory as generic concepts underlying objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions, and sequences of actions (Rumelhart and Ortony (1977)). This study combines theories of metaphoric thinking and knowledge structures in an attempt to explicate the presence and function of idioms in language.

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Introduction

The focus of this study, which is a descriptive study of idioms and meant as an initial foray into the general problem of idiomaticity in language, is the Russian idiom. In Russian, as with many other languages, the use of idioms and proverbs is prolific. They constitute an appreciable amount of everyday language and are therefore difficult to ignore. In fact, it is often stated in various philological works that to truly master and understand the language, it is necessary to be familiar with a sizable corpus of idiomatic expressions. The intent of this study is not to familiarize the reader with such a corpus of idioms; rather, it is an examination of the structure and function of idioms.

When considering the idiom, part of the question entailed in the study must be, why do they exist at all? Why does idiomaticity exist, when the job may be done using literal language? The practical and everyday use of idioms offers a beginning in the way of clarification. Idioms exist because they are often easier to use than literal language. They are systemically endemic.

Before the semantic and pragmatic aspects of idiomatic usage may be examined, it is first necessary to determine what is acceptedly considered to be an idiom. In the Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition the third definition of "idiom" is as follows :

> Any expression established in the usage of a language, that is peculiar to itself either in a grammatical construction or in having a meaning which cannot be derived as a whole from the conjoined meanings of its elements.

This definition is our functioning definition, the other definitions being omitted since they do not pertain to the topic at hand. In English we use such expressions as "to rain cats and dogs" to describe an exceptionally heavy rain fall, or something much more figurative such as "to kick the bucket" when referring to someone's death.

Russian scholars such as Molotkov, Babkin, Šmelov, and Šanskij have done much of their work in the study of idioms. In their studies, idioms are referred to as phraseological units (фразеологические единицы), and are part of the larger area of phraseology (фразеология). The term phraseology has two meanings associated with it. The first deals with the discipline of phrase structure, as it pertains to the study of syntax. The second meaning of phraseology pertains to the phraseological units, or idioms, themselves.

The significance of this area of study first came to light in Russia in the second half of the 19th century (Molotkov 1977: 7, and Babkin 1970: 4), with the compilation of dictionaries and the noting of idiomatic expressions. Since this initial acknowledgement occurred in the area of lexical study, it provided a starting point for the delimitation of idioms and related structures. The basis of this delimitation is the relationship of phraseological units (and associated structures) to words. Comparing and contrasting the semantic and grammatical ties of phraseological units to the word has further established and rooted their membership in the discipline of syntax as a building block of language.

Several classes of idiomatic syntactic structures fall under the general heading of phraseology. They include: proverbs (пословицы), maxims (поговорки), "winged phrases"

(крылатые выражения), and similes (сравнения). Although they share semantic and pragmatic similarities, these classes are no longer considered to enter into the rank and file of phraseological units on the syntactic level. With the peculiar exception of maxims, they do share one very essential characteristic with idioms, mentioned in the above definition: they are all linguistic units, whose constituent parts do not combine to provide the conventional meaning of the whole. The essential syntactic difference which distinguishes and separates idioms from proverbs, maxims and "winged phrases" is the sentential completeness of the latter. Proverbs, maxims, and "winged phrases" belong to aphorism, and by definition are "short, pithy sayings", sententially complete. (The further distinctions between these aphoristic types are not necessary to this study.) Idioms and similes , on the other hand, do not constitute sentences.

The proverb В Тулу со своим самоваром не ездят (One does not go to Tula with one's samovar) is structurally complete. The idiom (кричать) во всю Ивановскую ([to scream] through all of Ivanov street) is not structurally complete as a sentence and requires further adjuncts, such as a subject , and the conjugation of the verb. Thus , in an example taken from Molotkov (1977:118) we have: "Был немец громом в землю вжат; Врага железный жар знобил; По бронеколпакам сержант **Во всю Ивановскую** бил " (A. Nedogonov). In this example the idiom completes the predicate of the sentence. Сержант acts as the subject. To better facilitate the example of completeness, let us introduce an idiom which was extracted from a proverb. Derived, presumably, from the proverb Свой ум – царь в голове (One's intellect is the tsar of one's head) is the idiom без

царя в голове (without a tsar in one's head), the meaning of which needs no explanation, and also needs to be supplemented by a subject to function in a sentence.

Similes form another unique class of phraseological structures. To complicate matters, they are often included in idiomatic dictionaries such as Dubrovin's (1977) Book of Russian Idioms Illustrated, and commonly referred to as idioms in the wide sense of the word. Here it is necessary to emphasize the distinction that the word **idiom** in this study refers to phraseological units, and not to similes. Russian similes take the form of a verb or adjective and как followed by a noun or verbal phrase. Some examples are: здоровый как дуб (healthy as an oak), выскочить, вылететь как пробка (to fly out like a cork [out of a bottle]), and свежий как огурчик (fresh as a little cucumber, "as fit as a fiddle"). Although similes are also idiomatic, this study will be restricted to a corpus of examples featuring only one phraseological category, that of phraseological units, i.e. idioms.

Phraseological units themselves are comprised of various types of structures and fulfill various grammatical functions. We will examine these variations in some detail in the following chapter, since they are the focus of this study.

All the above categories of idiomatic structures share one very important characteristic; they were all created from the common experience of the Russian populus. They refer to the beliefs and folklore of a culture. Some originate specifically in literature, such as the "winged phrase", others from mythology, but most from the everyday and not so everyday occurrences of the simpler life of bygone years; from the great and rich customs, traditions and experiences of the peasant masses.

The main points of emphasis of this work will be the structural, semantic and pragmatic nature of Russian idioms. First, the syntactic and grammatical functions are examined, to determine precisely what parts of language idioms occupy. Second, the semantic structure and the metaphor they employ will be discussed. And third, pragmatic aspects are discussed with a continued examination of metaphoric processes, particularly the reorganization of knowledge, and the examination of "artificial" knowledge structures.

Since Molotkov (1977) has already been identified as a source for terminological classification, we now add that this work will also constitute the source of the majority of examples and classifications. The remainder of the examples are taken from Dubrovin (1977), Babkin (1970), Sanskij and Bystrova (1980), and Sanskij, Zimin, and Fillipov (1987). His is by no means the preeminent work on Russian phraseology; it is, however, a standard example of the many works and general treatment of the subject. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, and for the purpose and intent of this thesis, we will not deal with classifications other than those of Molotkov.

CHAPTER 1
THE SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF RUSSIAN IDIOMS

1. Phraseological Types.

Idioms, or Russian phraseological units, as they are classified today, exist as three basic types. They are phraseological fusions (фразеологические сращения), phraseological unities (фразеологические единства), and phraseological combinations (фразеологические сочетания). These three categories of phraseological units in Russian were first distinguished by V.V. Vinogradov (Šmelov1977:294).

Phraseological fusions are those idiomatic phrases which have been transformed by metaphor to such a degree that the lexical meaning of the whole cannot be derived from the individual lexical meaning of the component parts. They are absolutely indivisible. Examples of such idioms are собаку съел (ate the dog, or "knows something inside out"), бить баклуши (to cleave wood splinters, "to do nothing, twiddle one's thumbs") and заморить червячка (to underfeed the little worm, "to have a bite to eat").

Phraseological unities are those idiomatic phrases whose meaning is partially dependent on the semantic independence of the individual words. Some phraseological unities permit substitution of elements, e.g., держать камень (нож) за пазухой (to keep a stone (knife) inside one's shirt, "to have evil intentions"). Further examples of phraseological unities are, два сапога пара (two boots make a pair, "not a pin to chose between them"), and капля в море (a drop in the sea/bucket) In these instances, substitution of elements does not occur. Also some of the meaning is obtainable from

the component parts. Phraseological unities are not semantically as opaque as phraseological fusions.

Phraseological combinations are what Jaszczun and Krynski (1967:v) call the "freest of non-free combinations. The comprehension of the meaning of the individual words is mandatory for an understanding of the whole, and as a rule substitutions are possible, but only within certain lexical limits (e.g. измерить кого-л. взглядом [или взором, глазами] = to measure someone with a look [or a glance], "to examine somebody superciliously from top to toe")" (Ibid.). Shmelov (1977) writes that the primary difference of phraseological combinations, in comparison to phraseological fusions and unities, is their analyticity. In them, those words with phraseologically bound, or metaphorical, meaning allow a synonymous exchange.

The category of phraseological combinations is not added to that of fusions and unities by all within the discipline. Dubrovin (see below) excludes them. Others (e.g. Babkin 1970) include even additional categories. The omission of phraseological combinations perhaps stems from the weakness of metaphoric meaning as exhibited by the above example. However, judging by the above definitions, there is not much to chose between phraseological unities and phraseological combinations. They may be easily combined into one category.

To these categories are usually added stereotyped expressions or cliches ("set phrases") when assembled in dictionaries or phrase lists. N.M. Šanskij and E. Bystrova (1980) compiled 700 Russian Idioms and Set Phrases in which expressions such as добрый день, and добро пожаловать were included. Otherwise they only gave mention to phraseological fusions and unities. Another compilation,

Dubrovin's (1977) A Book of Russian Idioms Illustrated, also mentions only fusions and unities. Jaszczun and Krynski's (1967) A Dictionary of Russian Idioms and Colloquialisms does include all three categories.

The purpose of the above categorization is only to indicate where the process of metaphorization has most strongly transformed the meaning and use of a phrase. Phraseological fusions are most strongly metaphorical, and opaque, and as a result indivisible linguistic units. Phraseological unities are less metaphorical than fusions, and transparent, and allow certain variations, although lexically restricted.

2. Phraseological Syntax.

It has been mentioned that the phraseological unit owes its initial examination to the study of vocabulary and, contingently to the study of syntax. The study of the relationship amongst words in a sentence or phrase is encompassed twofold in the study of phraseology, particularly idioms, since idioms, as a unit, may be considered the syntactic and lexical equal of any individual word, and yet as a phrase exhibit internal relations equal to any non-idiomatic phrase. The idiom, then, functions simultaneously as a simple syntactic unit, as well as a complex one. Molotkov asks "... не является ли фразеологизм такой единицей языка, которая по форме представляет собой словосочетание, а по своему содержанию – слово? (1977:30). This creates the necessity to examine the idiom on various syntactic levels.

We have already discussed what semantic types of phrases are accepted to be phraseological units. The next question to be answered is: what constitutes a phrase? Molotkov's definition of a word-phrase (словосочетание), which is

accepted here, is: any two, three or more words combined and governed amongst themselves by the laws of the language, more specifically the laws of lexical and grammatical combination, which fully define the content of the expression. Thus, dealing with word-phrases one must take into consideration the concrete material base, that is the words themselves, and secondly the structural model or syntactic schema (1977:30,31). This also applies to the examination of phraseological units.

What distinguishes the phraseological unit from other word-phrases is its lexical limits and its semantic indivisibility. This is attributed to the metaphorization which transforms the phrase into an indivisible syntactic unit. Thus, the regular semantic relations between words and phrases are lost when a phrase is transformed into a phraseological unit. In the example, подвести под монастырь кого-нибудь, the literal meaning of the components parts is 'to bring or lead someone up to a monastery'. The idiomatic meaning of the phrase is "to put someone into an uncomfortable or difficult position". In bygone days errant or sinful citizens might be brought to the monastery by a family or community member to repent for their crimes, or to be advised on proper action by the local religious authorities (see, e.g. Dostoevskyj, The Brothers Karamazov, Book Two). Šanskij, Zimin, and Fillipov (1987) explain that Russian soldiers would lead hostages up' to the walls of a monastery, which doubled as a fortress during times of war. Today, to lead someone up to a monastery occurs primarily in this idiomatic phrase. Thus, the literal lexical meaning of the phrase is replaced by the figurative meaning, and the original semantic content, once dependent on each

component part, is replaced by a general meaning dependent on the whole of the phrase.

Although idioms are treated as a whole, there is some flexibility allowed in the syntactic schema in the form of variations. Molotkov explains this as follows, "...в границы фразеологизма все же могут иногда попадать слова, которые вступают в определенные отношения и связи не с фразеологизмом в целом, а только с отдельными компонентами его." (1977: 67). Thus within the limits of one idiom certain components may have been rendered interchangeable through the use of lexically similar items. In, e.g., the idiom брать за душу/сердце (to take someone by the heart/soul, "to touch someone's heart"), the following variations are possible, брать за живое (to take by the living [heart]), хватать за душу/сердце (to seize by the heart/soul), хватать за живое (to seize by the living [heart]), трогать за душу/сердце/живое (to touch the soul/heart/living [heart]), and the perfective partner of брать (to take) – взять – is a further acceptable substitution. Such variation is very restricted and does not detract from the unity of the phraseological unit.

In addition to such "paradigmatic" variations other variations may occur which do not influence the syntactic relations of the idiom and create any changes in grammatical categories. Molotkov calls these changes **formal variations** and at best these variations are only slight modifications. They should be considered to be actual components of the phraseological unit, indicators that in the basic formation of a unit are inherent two or more possible structural schemas, i.e. components that vary according to a stylistic design (colloquialism or formal language) and temporal

characteristics (obsolete or archaic, etc.). The variations affecting form are:

1. Phonetic and orthographic variation of components. Example, калиф (халиф) на час (caliph for an hour, "king for a day"), and дыхнуть (дохнуть) некогда (no'when' to breathe, "to be very busy, overburdened by one's work").

2. Morphological variation incurred by the formal change of endings. This may involve a change in case, examples накрутить хвост (хвоста) (to wind up someone's tail, "to give someone a scolding) and ни синь (синя) пороха (not even any blue dust, "not a speck left"), or a change in number, examples приложить руку (руки) (to put one's hand to something, to have a hand in something; "to have a finger in the pie"), and открывать Америку (Америки) (to discover America, "to retell stale news).

3. Morpho-syntactic variation , which may occur in two types. The first comprises those words dependent on the morphological models according to which they are formed, for example высунув (высунувши, высуня) язык (with one's tongue hanging out, "in a great hurry"), and положа (положив,положивши) руку на сердце (with one's hand on one's heart "scout's honour, [to say something] in complete honesty"). The second comprises those words which belong to a related category of words, structurally and semantically, differing in their morphological suffixes, primarily diminutives, for example подставлять ногу (ножку), подставить ногу (ножку) (to put a leg [under something or someone], "to do something on the sly, with the intention to

harm or hinder [someone]") and читать между строк (строчек) (to read between the lines).

The variations affecting the components of the phraseological unit are those lexical interchanges that are discussed above. Some idioms may have many permutations when all the possible variations are taken into account, as in the following example: давать (задавать стрекача (стречка), дать (задать) стрекача (стречка), (to give a jump, "to take to one's heels"). This propensity to vary is one of the basic formal traits of idioms. It is based on the loss of meaning of the individual components after metaphorization. This "delexicalization" of individual components facilitates a "relexicalization" of the component with related lexical items. Медведь (слон) на ухо наступил (a bear (or elephant), stepped on [one's] ear, "[someone] has no ear for music") provides a nice example by way of the related associations between the two unrelated animals. The metaphorization acts on two levels here. First, it is the mechanism by which the systemic integrity of the idiom as a linguistic unit is created. Secondly, it is the same mechanism by which an alternate variant can be found to complete the idiom and maintain the same semantic integrity. A bear and an elephant are two radically different species of animal, but both claim certain physical characteristics (in terms of size and dexterity) that successfully maintain the meaning of the idiom.

Except for those characteristics just examined, a phraseological unit is syntactically constructed according to the same model as word-phrases or sentences of the Russian language. This conformation to standards occurs only with

regard to the internal structure. However, it provides a formal means of evaluating which sort of phrases and sentences are transformable into idioms. From internal examination it is possible to determine what presents an acceptable phraseological structure. From these structural precedents Molotkov also provides additional explanations concerning the variations discussed above (1977: 90-94). These points will not be discussed here.

Aside from determining phraseological prototypes, the internal structure of the idiom also determines its external affiliation. Molotkov categorizes the phraseological units according to certain lexical and grammatical characteristics, which determine the part of speech they fulfill when implemented. Certain phraseological units will only combine with specific word groups, and will demand only the adjustment of certain grammatical categories. These lexical-grammatical categories are:

1. Nominal phraseological units, e.g. :
   казанская сирота (a Kazan orphan, "someone pretending to be impoverished or mistreated")
   медвежий угол (a bear's corner, "the backwoods, boonies")
   чертова дюжина (a devil's dozen, "thirteen")
   первая ласточка ("the first swallow")

   These units are used as any noun phrase may be used. Grammatically they operate according to the distinctions of gender, number and case. Some of these units may be used in the singular and the plural, while others are only possible in one or the other.

Example (All example sentences taken from Molotkov 1977:131-149):"Но **первой ласточкой** [из сообщений об освоении Севера] оказалось небольшая заметка в центральной прессе о полёте лётчика Головина 5 мая ‹‹далеко на север››...." (М. Галлай, В полётах и после полётов).

2. Verbal phraseological units, e.g. :
чесать язык (to scratch one's tongue, "to wag one's tongue")
подложить свиню (lay a pig near [someone], "to do [someone] an evil trick")
подвести под монастырь (see above)
делить шкуру неубитого медведя (to divide the skin of an unkilled bear, "to count one's chickens before they're hatched")

These units are used as any verbal phrase may be used. They operate with the grammatical categories of person, tense, aspect, mood, and (in the past tense) gender. Most employ the use of both aspectual partners, though some are restricted to the use of only one or the other.

Example : "Недовольство в дуле Николая Дубенко росло. Он не высказывал его в открытую, боясь Зоркина... он опасался, что тот может придумать какой-нибудь ловкий ход и **подвести** напарника **под монастырь**, обрушить на его голову сотни неприятностей" (В.Якимов, Преступление инженера Зоркина).

3. Adjectival phraseological units, e.g. :

в чём мать родила (in what one's mother bore one, "in one's birthday suit, buck-naked")
не в своей тарелке (not on one's own plate, "out of sorts")
без царя в голове (without a tsar in one's head, 'numbskull, unintelligent")
собаку съел ([one] has eaten the dog, "to know something inside out")

These units are used as any adjectival phrase may be used and in some instances are modified according to the categories of gender and number.

Example: "Абромов сразу, с первой минуты встречи, понял, что командир полка **не в своей тарелке**" (П. Федоров, Генерал Доватор).

4. Adverbial phraseological units, e.g. :

до мозга костей (to the marrow of one's bones)
ни за какие каврижки (not for any gingerbread, "not on your life")
не мудрствуя лукаво (not philosophizing slyly, "without further ado")
как по маслу (like sliding on oil, "without a hitch")

Sententially these units are used in the function of adverbs. Adverbial idioms are of seven types, according to Molotkov. They are as follows:

a. Manner. e.g. не лезя за слово в карман (Not to climb for a word into one's pocket, "to have a quick tongue")
b. Measure. e.g. кот наплакал (The tears the cat cried out,"nothing to speak of, enough to put in your eye")
c. Degree. e.g. до мозга костей (to the marrow of one's bones)
d. Place. e.g. куда макар телят не гонял (to where Makar did not herd his calves, "very far, to the moon and back")
e. Time. e.g. с минуты на минуту (from minute to minute, "anytime now, immediately")
f. Reason. e.g. с бухты – барахты (coils of a rope unraveling, "suddenly, without visible reason, without thinking")
g. Goal. e.g. для отвода глаз (for the rejection of the eyes, "to put up a screen")

Example: "Оба живут **не мудрствуя лукаво**, умея находить и смысл и наслаждение в самом процессе жизни." (М. Горький, письмо К.С. Станиславскому, нач. янв. 1902).

5. Verbal-propositional, i.e. predicative phraseological units, e.g. :

медведь на ухо наступил (a bear stepped on [one's] ear, "[someone] has no ear for music, couldn't carry a tune in a bucket")
как корова языком слизала (as if a cow had licked [it] away with her tongue, "vanished without a trace")
семь пятниц в неделе (seven Fridays in one week, "[someone] who easily and frequently changes their mind and intentions, or, a quickly changing and unstable circumstance")

море по колено (the sea is knee-deep, "one couldn't care less, devil-may-care")

These last-named idioms are semantically unified by the general meaning of action which is subject to or experienced by an individual, or refers to a permanent quality or condition. These idioms are usually used in the capacity of the predicate in simple sentence and are subject to the categories of tense and aspect. Again, both aspects of a verb are generally used, in those units where a verb occurs, but there are examples where only one or other is acceptable.

Example: "Мне уж и без вина—то **море по колено** было — от одной уверенности в жизни...а от вина к рассвету совсем шальная стала...развезло, сама не своя...Как уж тогда все это вышло — не хочу говорить" (В. Розов, В день свадьбы).

6. Interjectional phraseological units. e.g. :

Вот где собака зарыта (Here's where the dog is buried, "that's the heart of the matter")
Бабушка надвое сказала (Grandmother said it two ways, or ambiguously, "it remains to be seen, we'll see what we see")
Чёрт возьми! (The devil take it)
Отсохни у меня язык (Let my tongue dry up and wither away)

These idioms have no special grammatical indicators. They may only be classified according to semantic groups. These groups are, e.g., expressions of emotion

(чёрт возьми), expressions of will (ради бога – "God willing"), expressions of greetings of arrival or partings (наше вам с кисточкой – [we'll send] our [servants] to you with a brush "our respects, compliments"), expressions of requests or formulas of invitation (милости просим – we request charity, "you are always welcome" and expressions of a vow or oath (убей меня бог – let God kill me).

Example: "–А–а–а, Маркушин! – растянув губы в деланной улыбке, тянет председатель. – **Наше вам с кисточкой** ! Гуляешь?" (И. Давыдов, Сегодня мы прощаемся в последний раз).

These lexical-grammatical categories are central to the basic understanding of the idioms since the comprehension of the content of the idiom also involves grammatical meaning and the grammatical categories to which they are connected. The other component crucial to the understanding of idioms, the lexical meaning of phraseological units, will be the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2
THE SEMANTICS OF RUSSIAN IDIOMS

1. Limits of Russian Idioms.

In addition to determining the semantic content of idioms, scholars have also attempted to define their semantic limits. Fernando (1978) summarizes the trends of thought in this area. She draws on the studies of such scholars as Makkai(1972), Weinreich(1969), Gumpel (1974), Roberts (1944) and others in producing a structural definition of idiom. The major achievement of her essay is the provision of a set of structural and semantic limits. Let us examine the seven criteria which Fernando claims are basic to an idiom. They are (1978: 336):

i) An idiom is semantically not the result of its constituent parts, i.e. it is non-literal in terms of the referents denoted by these parts.
ii) An idiom has a literal homonymous counterpart which would render it amibiguous unless suitably contextualized. I.e. it requires 'double exposure'.
iii) It has a compulsory literal semantic counterpart which may substitute with it synonymously in a given context.
iv) It is a syntactic unit consisting of two or more free morphemes.
v) It is a syntactic unit manifesting relative lexical integrity.
vi) It is not generatable.
vii) It is institutionalized.

The first criterion needs no further explanation. The second refers to what Makkai (1978: 319) terms disinformation. A 'true idiom' needs to be qualified by a literal counterpart. The idiom itself is potentially misleading, and may disinform if it

is interpreted literally. Thus, the Russsian idiom бежать высунув язык (to run with one's tongue hanging out, "to run at a breakneck pace") may be interpreted literally as it occurs in a text. The idiom originates in its description of dogs and other animals which may actually run with their tongues hanging out. However, the reference to human subjects is only metaphorical. The integration of this idiom into an appropriate context and frame of reference eliminates the possibility of literal interpretation. Thus, the unit is "doubly exposed" . This is regarded as being the most essential feature of true idioms and excludes constructions such a hyperbole, and those which are only phraseologically peculiar such as добрый день, or добро пожаловать. The English 'to rain cats and dogs' is included as an example of a hyperbole. The Russian equivalent is дождь льёт как из ведра (the rain is pouring as if from a bucket) is also excluded from the category of idiom, since it is a simile.

Criteria iii, iv and vii are self-explanatory. Criterion v is a syntactic criterion and refers to the language-specific peculiarities of phraseology. Fernando points out that dialectal and national differences within the same language would fall into a related category. By generatability, criterion vi refers to the fact that idioms are not spontaneously created according to a set of syntactic rules. Thus the syntactic pattern underlying one idiom does not necessarily produce other idioms.

According to Fernando only criteria i, ii, and vii are the necessary components to a 'true-idiom'. As pertains to Russian idioms these three criteria are accurate and sufficient to define their semantic boundaries.

2. Lexical Meaning.

Molotkov tells us that the lexical meaning of phraseological units as a linguistic concept consists of several levels of semantic abstraction and generalization, from the literal to the metaphorical (on metaphor see section 3 below) (1977:106). The concrete and specific lexical meaning of a group of idioms may be unified by a more general meaning (in this case the metaphorical meaning), and this transformed meaning may in turn be unified thematically. From this stratification emerge certain semantic-thematic ranges.

Phraseological units refer to various topics. With the exception of чертова дюжина no idiom refers to number, but many refer to the topic of quantity, of scarcity or abundance. For example, как сельдей в бочке (like herrings in a barrel), капля в море (see 1.1), or кот наплакал (see 1.2). Other thematic areas include friendship, happiness, justice, duty, death, service etc..

These thematic areas, however, are those target domains of the idiomatic metaphor. The target, or sometimes referred to as topic domain, is the subject of observation. The vehicle domain of the metaphor provides the description of the target. Thus, in the metaphor "Juliet is the sun", sun acts as the vehicle of description of Juliet, who is the topic. In idioms this relationship is more opaque. The idiom, e.g. кот наплакал is in its entirety the vehicle for the metaphoric meaning, or topic. The same is true of all idioms. The vehicle domain of the idiomatic metaphor, thus the literal meaning of the unit, may be classified according to their own thematic areas. Some refer to the topic of hunting, e.g. делить шкуру неубитого медведа (see 2.2), some to agriculture, e.g. бросить камешки в чей-либо огород (to throw pebbles into

someone's garden, "to make an implied criticism, to give someone a dig"), some to domestic affairs , e.g., каши не сваришь (you won't cook kasha [with someone], "you can't get on [with someone], you won't get anywhere [with someone]") and others to areas of everyday life which were repeated, and some of which still are being repeated, in the Russian countryside.

Not only may idioms occupy more than one level of semantic-thematic meaning, they may also be polysemic, expressing more than one metaphoric meaning. Molotkov classifies these according to two types. The first polysemic units are those where the meanings appear to be derivationally interdependent, as if one meaning arose from the other. E.g.: поворачивать оглобли (to turn the shafts), metaphorically means "to turn back or to retrace one's steps" in one sense, or "to go back on one's word, decisions or convictions" in the other. Here, the second sense derives from the first. Units of the second type exhibit a semantic independence in their separate meanings. E.g. отдавать концы (to give up the ends) means "to die", and "to run away" or "take off". Molotkov provides this unit as an example of semantically independent variants.

Molotkov asserts that the meaning of polysemic units should be considered as follows: one meaning being literal (apart from the original literalness of the component parts) and the other being metaphoric (115). Incidentally this assertion is normally true of polysemic words. This leads to the question of how such literalness occurs in an originally metaphoric expression.

In both of the above examples a certain parallelism exists between the two idiomatic meanings. The two meanings of the first example contain the basic underlying meaning of a retrograde action, whether it be concrete or abstract. The second example is a bit more elusive, in that the similarity of

meanings is contingent upon one's belief of such philosophical questions of life and death. Therefore let us hazard the assumption that the belief behind this particular idiom is death as escape. This would be compatible with the experience of the common Russian peasant, whose life was more often than not something to be endured. Then it is possible to ascertain that escape is the unified general meaning of the two variants. It is possible that Molotkov may have overlooked the possibility of metaphorical parallelism in this particular example, and that it may be posssible to attribute more units of the second type to this phenomenon.

It is generally accepted that idioms represent what is termed **dead metaphor.** The usual argument goes as follows. Metaphor, as a poetic and a linguistic device, is original and creative. It requires a certain amount of thought to be interpreted and therefore initiates certain cognitive processes which are specific to its own constitution. Precisely what these processes are will be the focus of the next chapter. At this point it is sufficient to say that metaphor involves **speaker's practice** (Cooper 1986: 56), or, as Searle (1979: 93) describes it, as **speaker's utterance meaning**, i.e., what the speaker means to say. Once a metaphor becomes "dead", it is lifted from the realm of private industry and becomes convention. An idiom no longer requires the attention and concentration which a novel metaphor involves. It becomes a conventional linguistic sign, integrated into the system of language and often used without a second thought.

Once the metaphor loses its original impetus and progresses to idiomaticity it becomes the target of a possible second metaphorization, which would naturally parallel the original metaphor and itself become an idiom in time. This time span is

probably much shorter for the derivative metaphor, since the path of digression is already established by the parent idiom.

The developement of such secondary metaphorization may be reconstructed as follows:

literal expression $_1$ > *metaphoric expression* $_1$ > *idiomatic expression* $_1$ = *literal expression* $_2$ > *metaphoric expression* $_2$ > *idiomatic expression* $_2$ = *literal expression* $_3$

These polysemic forms are not specific to any particular lexical-grammatical or thematic order of phraseological units. However, we have already noted that one of the factors which produces the differentiated idiomatic metaphors is the distinction of concrete versus abstract. The general versus the specific, and the whole versus the part are other distinctions which are made in the idiomatic metaphor pairs. E.g. the idiom кровь с молоком (blood and milk), can refer to either the complexion (a healthy complexion with rosy cheeks), or to someone enjoying vigorous health. Рубить с плеча (to chop [it] straight from the shoulder) can mean to say precisely what one thinks without concern for the consequences, or to act in a straightforward manner, often without thinking, impudently and rashly.

3. Metaphoric Meaning.

Before a dead metaphor becomes an idiom, it is a live one. In order to understand the end product, it is necessary to examine its creation and its history. Although the modern usage of an idiom presupposes only a superficial familiarity with it, its origin and popular acceptance , its original significance and value, are the factors which condition its institutionalization. How idioms initiate themselves in language and how they

manage to persist are concerns of this study, and on that account an examination of metaphor is necessary.

Searle's claim that metaphorical meaning belongs to **speaker's utterance meaning** puts the function of metaphor almost squarely into the realm of rhetoric. That is, it is a device used by speakers to sway the listener toward their own point of view. Concurrent to that view, Olson (1988: 215) believes that metaphor expresses the relation between a speaker's intentions, goals, beliefs and utterances. "Speaker's meaning" is the function of the speaker's intentions, and therein subordinate to the function of persuasive argument. Since the use of metaphor depends on the knowledge and capability of the creator, speaker's meaning must be restricted by speaker's competence. The speech act, highlighting performance, would thus include the considerations outlined above. Metaphor, in this light, is a practical and personal device.

This shows us where metaphor fits into a communicational exchange. We have yet to answer two questions: what metaphor is, and how it functions. The Aristotelian view is that metaphor is an elliptical simile; simply an economical way of describing one object in terms of another. Thus the metaphor *A is B* is actually the simile *A is like B* with *like* being implied. This provides a starting point to examine the primary function of metaphor, and that is the examination of one item through comparison and contrast to another.

Max Black (1962), in his "interaction" view of metaphor, extends the traditionally accepted "comparison" and "substitution" views, which account only for surface activity in the metaphor, to include a "system of associated commonplaces" (1962: 40). According to Black, a metaphor

utilizes more than the initial nominal associations of its members. Black uses the terms "principal" subject and "subsidiary" (later he changes this to "secondary") subject to describe the topic and vehicle domains. Most important to his theory is the system of references, and the interplay which occurs between the subjects of a metaphor. It is these associations, or schemata, which fill the metaphor out and move it along. According to Black (1962:45) "The metaphor selects, emphasizes, suppresses, and organizes features of the principal subject by implying statements about it that normally apply to the subsidiary subject." This in turn

> "...involves shifts in meaning of words belonging to the same family of system as the metaphorical expression; and some of these shifts, though not all, may be metaphorical transfers. (The subordinate metaphors are, however, to be read less " emphatically.")."

The result of metaphor, according to Black's "interaction" view, is that it *organizes* one view according to the design of the other; in other words, it organizes the knowledge of one topic with respect to the other. Since a certain structure of knowledge was already in place prior to the process, we may assume that a **reorganization of knowledge** occurs. Thus metaphor presents a new perspective achieved through the restructuring of the old.

It is in this capacity that the understanding of similarities or differences is best used to advantage. One possible arrangement of this relationship between similarity and metaphor places similarity as the necessary precursor to metaphoric generation. However, Olson (1988: 221) , posits an interesting reversal,

> "... to approach metaphor as an ability, especially a perceptual one, of seeing relations between things rather than as a special use of language, seems to me, to be impossible, If I am right in suggesting that a metaphor is only a metaphor by virtue of being recognized as a metaphor, all the similarities in the world are not going to help to account for it. Rather, it will depend on a consciousness of *language* , of the discrepancies between possible ways of relating what is said and what is meant."

Olson is suggesting that metaphoric activity is due to a special linguistic consciousness which gives rise to a perceptual one. Familiarity with metaphor as a linguistic structure furnishes the mechanism of analysis with analogy. One needs to be aware of what a tool does before one can use it. Thus, similarity becomes a product of the consciousness of metaphor. This still leaves us with the question of how metaphor came into human consciousness.

Olson would at least partially agree with Ernst Cassirer on the point that metaphor plays an active role and not a passive one. Cassirer (1953) considers that metaphor is an essential condition of speech and not just a development of it. His explanation of language and its relation to myth presents them as parallel developments, both representing an abstract symbolism, that of verbal creation attempting to capture the essence of reality. He writes,

> "Language and myth stand in an original and indisoluble correlation with one another, from which they both emerge but gradually as independent elements. They are two diverse shoots from the

> same parent stem, the same impulse of symbolic formulation, springing from the same basic mental activity, a concentration and heightening of simple sensory experience" (1954: 88).

In this relationship metaphor acts as a conditioner, an instigator and a binder of language and mythic thought. Thus, metaphor is a reflection of mythic and religious belief exemplified in a language. An example Cassirer provides is the phenomenon of *pars pro toto* , a basic metaphoric construction in which a part of a system is used to represent the whole. In many religious world views belief in magic is very common. *Pars pro toto* is a principle of magic, in which possession or dominance over one part of a system, gains access to the power of the entire system. Thus, in the practice of voodoo, the acquisition of a strand of hair or a nail paring is sufficient for an individual to "cast a spell" which affects the owner of these items. This is a simplistic explanation of Cassirer's theory, but none the less it supports the premise that metaphoric thought is integral to human consciousness.

Cassirer's theory explains the origin of language emerging from the need to communicate abstract concepts. Those primal abstract concepts deal with the awakening of spiritual emotions and the "gods" that are inspired by those circumstances. Thus, language, myth, and metaphor are all primal symbolic forms.

4. Metaphoric and Idiomatic Meaning.

Now we may finally return to the concept of **dead metaphor.** As noted previously, idioms are generally accepted as representative of this phenomenon. However, in Chapter 1 it is noted that certain phraseological types exist; namely

phraseological fusions, unities and combinations. It is also noted that the purpose of such a categorization is to indicate the degree of metaphorization exhibited in a phraseological unit. Units considered more metaphorical are those where the initial lexical meaning has been most strongly transformed and where no variations occur. It is possible to conclude that the process of metaphorization in idioms is relative to each individual idiom, and therefore the idiomaticity or institutionalization of each idiom will also vary. The question which then arises concerns the boundary between metaphor and idioms. When is a metaphor dead, and where does an idiom begin?

There are a few schools of thought pertaining to this topic. Cooper provides a useful overview of trends of thought in that direction,

> "...The guiding idea has been the fairly natural one that dead metaphors are distinguished from others only in degree. Hence a favourite game has been to devise scales or spectra on which dead metaphors are placed at, or near, one end, with the liveliest, neonate ones at the other. Fowler, for instance, has a scale that runs from 'stone-dead', through 'dead', 'three-quarters dead', 'half-dead or dormant'... to 'live'. What the scale measures, he says, is the 'consciousness of their [the metaphors'] nature as substitutes for their literal equivalents'. The more we forget that it is being used instead of a literal equivalent, the deader is the metaphor. We might call this the 'amnesiac scale'. Another writer prefers this scale: 'dead', 'cliched', 'stock', 'recent', 'original'. Here it looks as if the age is the measure. Like a person, a metaphor approaches death as it ages. We could call this the 'geriatric scale' (1986: 119).

Other scales have emphasized such features as paraphrasability and non-resonance (the inability to support a high degree of implicative elaboration). Unfortunately, no definitive assesment of dead, or established metaphor (the term preferred by Cooper) exists. However, the above scales are still useful since they are based on the observation that a gradation occurs in the idiomatic metaphor. Even Cooper concedes that "The answer to the question whether idioms in the non-technical sense are metaphorical is, of course, that some are and some are not" (1986: 180). He illustrates this by the English examples of *It was not me*, which is phraseologically peculiar and considered idiomatic, but certainly not metaphoric (Добрый день [see section 1.1] is such a construction in Russian, and therefore, in accordance with Fernando's and our criteria, not an idiom), and those more metaphoric like the expressions *dead tired* and *whacked*.. The incongruence of lexical and idiomatic meaning between the expressions бить баклуши (to cleave wood splinters, "to idle away the time, twiddle one's thumbs") and ни за какие коврижки (not for any gingerbread, "not on your life") illustrates our point that some idioms are more metaphoric than others.

Cooper solves the problem of the function of established metaphor by acknowledging it as a generative member of metaphoric expression. This process occurs and is possible due to the systemic nature of metaphor, stemming from the same impulse of language. According to him, and his ideas are accepted here, established metaphor is continually giving rise to novel metaphors; the extensions of a parent or root metaphor. He writes, "Standard, established metaphorical talk is only describable as such because it results from once fresh

metaphor and because it preserves the generative power to issue in novel metaphor" (139). This process is the same process of secondary metaphorization described in the previous section.

The terms transparency and opacity of idioms are relevant to this discussion. It has been noted that phraseological fusions are more opaque than unities. In those instances where an expression is totally opaque, we may say that the idiom, and therefore the metaphor, is truly dead. The idiom in such cases is no longer sufficiently supported by a social and cultural context to be comprehensible, and therefore no longer generative. Upon a metaphor's inception into idiomaticity we find the highest degree of transparency. As the cultural context of usage changes, the idiom becomes more and more opaque, thus truly becoming dead. Thus, most idioms are not dead, but established metaphor. Only when the idiom itself is obscure, can a metaphor be said to be dead.

Thus, established metaphors and idioms exist as the result of a certain momentum inherent in language. This momentum involves conservation of a systemic energy, which recycles old structures into new. Active metaphor ceases to be active when it becomes accepted enough to become a source of generation of this system. The phraseological unit may then take its place (not all established metaphors become phraseological units, but all phraseological units begin as active metaphors).

5. Cultural Meaning.

Existing compilations of Russian phraseology are usually prefaced by an introduction proclaiming the importance of these forms as 'monuments of the people', and as the linguistic embodiments of a national heritage. In them are references to

Russian history, literature and folklore. The experience of the Russian populus is thus, in these authors' opinions, encapsuled in instantaneously retrievable forms.

Culture is represented explicitly in language through various forms. Phonology, syntax and morphology all represent aspects of culture, though abstractly, through their uniqueness and specificity to a particular language. Phraseology explicitly expresses those concrete aspects of a culture

In examining how culture and language interrelate on the level of Russian phraseology, it is first necessary to come to an understanding of what culture is. The definition of culture is a problematic one. However, for the purposes of this study Goodenough's definition of "Culture as shared knowledge" serves nicely (as cited in Quinn & Holland 1987:4). Within the boundaries thus defined fall more popular notions of culture, such as artifacts or oral tradition. Naturally there exists a great deal of overlap between various cultures and no unique culture could truly exist, only unique cultural blends. The Russian culture overlaps with Asian cultures, as well as with eastern and western European cultures. These, in turn are all members of the greater human culture. Within the Russian culture more narrowly defined sets of social cultures exist. In bygone years a peasant culture existed which interrelated with the aristocratic culture, the intelligentsia and so on. Modern equivalents exist with even further divisions.

A popular and common view of the relationship of language and culture places culture as the supplier of content, while language acts as the force which shapes the content into form providing grammar and syntax. In contradistinction to this view others (e.g., Perkins 1980) have pointed out that structure also generates content. Cognitive distinctions (such as

metaphorical generation) may necessitate grammatical ones in the existing structure, and this expands the quantity of information conveyed. Other distinctions such as the awareness of occurrence of an event prior to the moment of speech (tense-aspect), and real versus relative function of objects (inflection), create grammatical categories.

Language acts as a medium of informational exchange. However, it is not only a tool used to exchange information, it also presents it according to a certain plan. According to Quinn and Holland (1987:14),

> "Our cultural understanding of the world is founded on many tacit assumptions. This underlying cultural knowledge is, to use Hutchins's (1980:12) words, 'often transparent to those who use it'. Once learned, it becomes what one sees with, but seldom what one sees. This 'referential transparency' (Ibid.),...causes cultural knowledge to go unquestioned by it's bearer."

Thus linguistic structure and form endorse a cultural perspective and the information thereby delivered, since language is not only the medium of encoding but also that which is encoded.

The view that language conditions culture raises the issue of linguistic determinism. According to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, the plan according to which information is presented creates an entire world view, and determines how one segments the world. Sapir describes culture as what society thinks, and language as how we think it. Thus, knowledge (culture), which is encoded in language, influences human reaction to certain stimuli. An individual from one cultural background might react to certain objects and

situations differently from an individual from another background.

Another factor which arises in the contemplation of knowledge and how it is implemented is the factor of emphasis. With respect to those stimuli which are common to many cultures, such as environmental phenomena, human reaction will be conditioned by the emphasis placed on a particular phenomenon. The emphasis is determined by the role of the phenomenon in the culture. For example, snowfall elicits different responses from a North American living in a large city from those of a North American of the Inuit culture living in a hunting encampment. Thus, the environment is not so much segmented according to cultural knowledge, as it is emphasized differently. The points of emphasis, or reference, are dependent on collective and individual experience. These reference points may be encoded in the language. Within linguistic systems certain structures facilitate markedness of certain forms. Idioms are an example of this type.

Furthermore, these marked structures or reference points contribute to idioms often being untranslatable from the source language into another. Some idioms do produce direct translations from language to language. Often such expressions are borrowed, or calques, or have common sources. Biblical sources produce many such commonalities. Beyond these possibilities individual cultures will spontaneously produce expressions which coincide. This can sometimes be attributed to universals of human culture.

Thus, Brown (as cited in Eastman 1990:108) claims that linguistic **relativity** categorizes the world by using language to do what we need it to do. This need is determined subjectively. Thus, language is based on pragmatics and

relates (or, makes reference) according to need, rather than determines (or, provides segmentation) according to world view.

Thus, idioms are points of reference in language which are culturally explicit. They exist on the upper level of structure of a language, that is, they are structurally and semantically intact and independent. However, they require integration into a larger context. This point will be discussed below. The points of reference represented by idioms are broad in scope, covering a base of cultural experience, and the prejudices and predispositions contained therein. The metaphor thusemployed in idioms refers to this experience. The information contained within the idiom conveys the cultural references of the metaphor and the language.

In this chapter we have examined the semantic and lexical borders of idiomatic expression. We have also examined the role metaphor plays in language and in particular in the construction of idioms. We have also examined how culture affects and influences language. In the following chapter we will examine the use and facility of idioms in language.

CHAPTER 3
SOME PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

1. Metaphor.

In the previous chapter we introduced the concept that metaphor represents "speaker's utterance meaning", for which it is a personal, stylistic and pragmatic device, defining also the semantic limits of metaphor in speech. Black's interaction theory of metaphor provides an introduction to the metaphoric process active not only on the surface of language, but also beneath it in the accompanying organization of semantic associations. In this chapter we will examine the cognitive processes of metaphoric thought in more detail.

Allan Paivio (1979) represents a "middle of the road" approach in the explanation of metaphoric processes. He is used here because his balanced approach complements the introductory design of this study.

Paivio states that "metaphorical behaviour includes both motivational and cognitive aspects" (1979: 151). A key motivational issue, which is also central to this study, concerns the existence of metaphoric expressions. Why do they exist at all? Why does literal language adequately not cover all of our communicational needs? Paivio outlines three functions proposed by Ortony (1975) providing such motivational possibilities. The most important consideration to each function, according to Ortony's specifications, is the ability to convey "continuous experiential information, using a discrete symbol system" (Paivio 1979: 152). Such is the function of metaphor. The three individualized functions are:

1. Efficiency. Metaphor provides a "compact way of representing a subset of cognitive and perceptual

features salient to it."

2. Inexpressibility. Metaphor "enables us to talk about experiences which cannot be literally described."

3. Imagery. "Metaphor provides a vivid and therefore, memorable and emotion-arousing representation of perceived experience."

The criterion of inexpressibility might better be described as 'expressibility'. The functions of 'expressibility' and imagery are indissolubly linked. Inexpressibility implies the presence of perceptions, which are inexpressible due to their abstract nature. The most abstract of such perceptions are the emotions. If we may recall the conclusions of Cassirer, language, myth and metaphor all originated from the need to express these "sensory experiences", otherwise inexpressible through other media. Metaphor becomes a device through which the likened elements of two experiences are amplified, by the emotive capacity of the imagery employed. In this manner a frame of reference is established based on the mechanism of emotional response. Thus the 'expressibility' of one experience depends on the original inexpressibility of another; this is a reminder of the intractable nature of symbolic formation.

This expressibility is further translated into idioms, particularly into opaque examples where the denotation of the original meaning has been blurred, and all that remains is the emotive, or conatative function of the idiom. A good example of such an idiom is the English "to kick the bucket", the origins and reference of which are obscure. However, it is continually used as a humorous and tension easing remark about death.

As concerns the actual cognitive processes which accompany metaphoric thought, Paivio stresses a dual coding approach

that integrates the two commonly accepted schools of imagery and verbal associative views. Those who adhere to the imagery school view metaphor as a device which instigates the analysis of its constituents through perceptual imagery. Paivio cites Langer's contributions of "abstractive seeing" to the imagery school as one of the key concepts of this theory. He writes, with reference to Langer (1979: 117-118),

> "...the symbolic function of images is revealed in "their tendency to become metaphorical...[they are] our readiest instruments for ab-stracting concepts from the tumbling stream of impressions" ...They derive from experience , but the original perception of experience is "promptly and spontaneously abstracted, and used symbolically to represent a whole kind of actual happening" (1979: 156).

The verbal associative process attributes similarity relations to common verbal associations. Paivio cites Koen's (1965) experiments as providing definite proof of verbal associative process. In his experiment subjects were requested to complete sentences for which they were given two variables; one literal and the other metaphoric. Koen's results indicate the choice of variable is dependent upon the rest of the sentence, and the support provided for the variable. In addition to selecting the most appropriate variation to complete the sentence, the subjects were instructed to record the difficulty of each choice. Koen's goal was to prove that "Metaphor may be viewed as a psycholinguistic phenomenon rather than purely perceptual one" (1965: 133). He concludes,

> "In the case of metaphor, where perception of similarities is said to occur, verbal connections might be expected to play an important role in

> operationally defining "similarity" itself. While metaphor may well have its genesis in perceived functional analogies between the referents of figurative and literal terms, in adult speech its character appears to be simply and accurately assessed through a culturally standardized system of intra-verbal connections" (133).

However, according to Paivio's dual coding approach, the verbal associative and imagery systems cooperate in language and metaphor. They are both independent yet interconnected systems designed to store,order and manipulate stimulus information. The interconnection of the two systems allows for transfer of information from one to the other, or allows one to initiate activity in the other. "Thus, words can evoke imagery, and concrete events can evoke verbal descriptions" (1979: 163).

Combined, these two processes provide the cognitive tools to convey the continuous experiential information emphasized by Ortony. How they contribute to metaphor comprehension is outlined by Paivio. A summary of his points follows.

1. "Dual coding enhances the probability of finding a common ground in long-term memory " (163). This works on the basis that pictures are more easily recalled than words, and concrete words are more easily recalled than abstract, "low imagery" words.

2. "Integrated images make for efficient information storage" (166). The very nature of imagery is such that its organizational characteristics allow for storage of information in large integrated chunks. Imaginal associations (as they are termed by Paivio) are a pivotal feature of this process. These may occur as either successive or simultaneous processes.

Paivio provides examples of the concepts of the sun and one's house. When one thinks of the sun, one thinks of the sky. When one thinks of one's house, one thinks of its components and contents. Access to any part of an image implies access to the whole and vice versa. This phenomenon may be regarded as another manifestation of the process of *pars pro toto* discussed earlier (see 2.3 above). In this manner large amounts of information become available when stored as integrated images.

3. "Imagery ensures processing flexibility" (167). This flexibility is dependent on the multidimensional and associative ability of imaginal processing. Returning to our example of a house, in order to count the number of windows on the building, one can view it from various angles. This procedure does not need to follow any particular sequential path, whereas verbal associations are sequentially constrained. This ability is important to the discovery and invention process and to the generation of novel images (and metaphors) from previously unrelated words. Paivio cites the results of Segal (1976), who presented subjects with sets of two, three, or four nouns and required them to generate either meaningful images or sentences. Reaction time was measured, and the results showed only slightly increased reaction time for image generation but sharply increased reaction time for sentence generation. This process also figures in the integration and interpretation of idioms.

4. "Topic and vehicle as retrieval cues for relevant information ". The importance of the topic and vehicle in the comprehension of metaphor is self evident. However, here Paivio emphasizes the role which they play in the interpretation of metaphor over the role of context. Paivio

especially emphasizes the vehicle as the dominant member of metaphoric construction. He writes, "The vehicle serves as an efficient conceptual peg for metaphor comprehension to the extent that it promotes retrieval of images and verbal information that intersects with information aroused by the topic" (168).

5. "Verbal processes keep search and retrieval on track" (170). The relevance of information initially obtained through imagery and long term memory is determined and evaluated using the verbal system. The verbal system thus regulates the systematic progression of the conceptual flow. "The sequential nature of verbal processes contributes to an orderly, logical sequence in the flow of ideas. In brief, the verbal system keeps the search process on track in regard to the goal of discovering a relevant relational idea ".

The phenomenon of *pars pro toto* is analogically exemplified by idioms. It has already been noted that the entire phraseology of an idiom acts as the vehicle domain of the metaphoric reference. Therefore, in effect, the idiom is a part of a larger structure. Its linguistic structure is the part which provides access to a system of associated concepts. Thus, the idiom гусей дразнить (to tease [the] geese, "to annoy someone, often without purpose or reason; to provoke ill feelings") describes and exemplifies an action which represents a larger system of motivation and results. The surface of the idiom is but the "tip of the iceberg".

The imaginal quality of the metaphor motivates the initial recognition of the idiom. It assists in recalling the structure from memory, since the concreteness of the image makes it easier to recall. The storage of the entire schema of the idiom, following Paivio, is thus facilitated by the image of angry

geese. The retrieval of this image is then augmented by the conceptual associations attributed to the metaphor.

At this point let us postulate that the initial assimilation of the idiom, i.e. its being learned, would produce a second image to accompany the metaphoric one. This secondary image represents the actual incident to which the idiom is linked. Thus, the idiom is connected to a real life event, or grounded, as it were. Therefore the retrieval of the idiom from memory recalls a system of images, or integrated images, as Paivio calls them, thus conforming to the idea of *pars pro toto*. Subsequent usage of the idiom then also employs the speaker's own personalized conception of it.

Paivio's third point applies to the generation of novel images (and metaphors). In reference to idioms, it also accounts for the basic scanning which occurs when an unfamiliar idiom is encountered. However, in the successful comprehension of the idiom, the implementation of point 3 necessarily undermines point 4, because in order to properly interpret those images produced by the novel image the context of the idiom must support the image of the metaphor. Thus, Paivio's fifth point is correct. This conclusion is also supported by Koen's observations above; that the "system of intra-verbal connections" is necessary to the successful integration of metaphor.

These functions describe how a metaphor operates on a cognitive level and how it organizes, or rather, using our definition from the last chapter, reorganizes information. Since we are already dealing with the way in which knowledge is structured, it will be efficacious to examine how these functions are utilized and integrated into the system of

everyday language usage. Therefore let us now introduce a new topic.

2. Knowledge Structures.

Whenever we do something, we more often than not follow a predetermined schema or plan. If we do not, then we often implement spontaneous 'goals' according to the design of a similar goal once pursued and achieved. Communication operates according to similar principles. Grice's theory of conversational implicature and additional studies of presupposition (both which are well documented in Levinson 1983) have effectively furnished us with the knowledge that communicative exchanges occur in a contextual vacuum, that is, there can be no such thing as an isolated speech act. This stems from the basis of linguistic signification and symbolic formation, in that all utterances must have referents, which are in turn defined according to a certain context. Successful communication involves the presence of background knowledge shared between participants, and inference, which maintains and ensures a fluid and efficient exchange.

In any given social situation, participants are expected to know the basic rules of conduct. As certain social expectations govern procedures in certain contexts, so do social, interpersonal and individual expectations govern a communicative exchange. These expectations govern the course followed by the participants, and grouped together form a repository of knowledge. According to Schank and Abelson (1977) we structure our knowledge according to the guidelines provided by this repository and recall them as schematic

entities. These schemas manifest themselves in different formal structures, depending upon their context and use.

Schank and Abelson's study was originally conducted in the application of artificial intelligence structures in computer programming. However, the title of their book is Scripts, Plans, Goals and Understanding: An Inquiry into **Human** Knowledge Structures (emphasis mine, MM) . They write that "the best way to approach the problem of building an intelligent machine is to emulate the human conceptual mechanisms that deal with language" (1977: 1). And so their research delves heavily into the realm of knowledge structures which underly basic linguistic structures. It is the contention of this thesis, that these knowledge structures are represented by such phraseological constructions in language as idioms.

Schank and Abelson represent one of many studies in the area of knowledge representation. Rumelhart and Ortony (1977) provide a useful summary of the trends in this field. However, Schank and Abelson's divisions and explanations of knowledge schemas lend themselves well to our purposes. The divisions are particularly relevant to this thesis, since they initiated their study of knowledge structures based "on the mechanisms that deal with language".

As the title of their study suggests, Schank and Abelson have divided the repository of knowledge structures into three basic types: "scripts", "plans" and "goals". The concept of episodic memory is central to the comprehension of the organization of these structures. Basically, "episodic memory is organized around propositions linked together by their occurrence in the same event or time span" (1977: 18).

A "**script**" is based on the common structure which emerges when an accumulation of similar episodes is stored. Thus, a

script is "an economy measure in the storage of episodes, when enough of them are alike they are remembered in terms of a standardized generalized episode which we call a script" (1977: 19). Thus, conventional social procedures and events like buying one's groceries, or attending a night at the opera, are enacted according to the script extracted from previous episodes.

The script is based to a large degree on causal chains: the assumption that certain sequences of events occur in a specific order. From these chains it is possible to postulate which mechanisms have developed to deal with the event sequences. These "exist in the form of large conceptual units" (1977: 38). Hence, a script is a "standardized event sequence", and "a predetermined stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well known situation" (1977: 41)

"**Plans**" are repositories for the general information of events which do not fit into any existing script. They are prescriptions for obtaining goals, extracted from generalized assumptions in the process of decision making. When routinized, plans may become scripts. The primary difference between scripts and plans is specificity, particularly context.

> "Thus, plans are where scripts come from. They compete for the same role in the understanding process, namely as explanations of sequences of actions that are intended to achieve a goal. The difference is that scripts are specific and plans are general. Both are necessary in any functioning system" (72).

Thus, referring back to our script examples of purchasing groceries or going out for the evening, the generic plan encompassed by these scipts is the obtainment of foodstuffs, and entertainment. In different classes of society and in

different cultures these plans will vary. Barter produces another type of plan in the obtainment of foodstuffs. Renting a video offers another plan of entertainment.

"**Goals**" are specific plans, yet not scripts, since they are determined by the participants or actor's role theme. The theme sets up expectations about actions, and may define interpersonal themes such as family relationships or a life theme such as ambition. Goals help to define a theme. "A theme is a package of goals that tend to occur together because of some property of one or more of the actors" (119). The roles fulfilled by participants are societal and as such, goals stemming from societal impulse will involve societal values or beliefs, or "expectancy rules", the preferred term of Schank and Albelson. Thus, in certain contexts, it is the woman's responsibility to purchase, cultivate or forage for food. The goal in these plans for obtaining the food is the nourishment of her family. Thus, the role theme of the woman is provider-nurturer and the goals of her actions are planned towards that end.

Scripts are also associated with a number of roles and are normally enacted from one role's unique point of view. To obtain a whole view, a composite script must be constructed. Therefore any one script is but one point of reference. Schank and Abelson use the example of a "restaurant script". The process of eating out requires a prescribed route of etiquette not only from the customer, but from the employees of the establishment. For that matter, various sorts of establishments (cafeterias, fast food outlet, smorgasbord or dining room) each entail their own set of rules, and therefore individualized scripts, although they may all be subsumed under a larger generic restaurant script.

Within such scripts are also subsumed varieties of language according to use, or registers (see Hudson 1980 for summary). Talking to one's six year old, buying tickets to a movie or asking one's boss for a raise are situations which involve a particular manner of speech or appropriate address. Within certain situations, articulating certain idioms may be extremely inappropriate, and therefore the use of idioms must be dependent on register. Of course this does not preclude the possibility that these idioms are being thought of at such moments. This is but another aspect of the conatative value of idioms.

In a communicative exchange each participant engages their own goal, plan or script. Whether the aim is to obtain or impart information, or one of more secondary intent (Austin's (1962) perlocutionary speech act), each participant's point of reference differs in regards to the totality of the exchange. If one asks a friend for advice and receives it, the totality of the exchange includes an exchange of information, both implicit and explicit. The explicit information takes the form of the advice given and the actual topic of conversation. The implicit information of the exchange is conveyed in the social roles assumed by the participants. By asking for advice one defers to one's advisor's knowledge and experience, and (if the intent is genuine) this implies respect and trust in the advisor's abilities. By giving the advice, the advisor is honouring the request, and , to a certain extent, accepting his position of superiority in knowledge.

Much of this implicit information deals with presupposition. To understand the structure and mechanisms of an exchange, the repository of knowledge needs to be intact, since "understanding is knowledge based" (67). According to Schank

and Abelson understanding is based on scripts and plans, or a mixture of both. In order to understand a certain presumption, a prediction of events is necessary, in addition to aknowledge of how events relate to each other in a chain of connectivity. In other words, a knowledge of event structure is necessary, but in distinction to the theory of presupposition, the event structure is based on general mechanisms (plans). Schank and Abelson summarize understanding as "... a process by which people match what they see and hear to prestored groupings of actions that they have already experienced. New information is understood in terms of old information" (67).

These are the basic conceptual designs behind scripts, plans and goals. Schank and Abelson give more detailed accounts of the linguistic and structural breakdown of each of these categories. Their accounts employ "**conceptual dependency theory**", a theory of the representation of the meaning of sentences, and **causal syntax** to map the progression of meanings in a sentence, and the emergence of these schemas. A detailed examination of these methods is not necessary here. However, within the guidelines of conceptual dependency theory there are at least two rules which are relevant to our study of idioms. They are (11):

A. For any two sentences that are identical in meaning, regardless of language, there should be only one representation.

B. Any information in a sentence that is implicit must be explicit in the representation of the meaning of that sentence.

Thus, any idiomatic sentence must be represented by its literal meaning. Unfortunately Schank and Abelson do not

provide any examples of figurative expressions mapped according to their theory, nor shall we attempt any such operation here. Nevertheless, theirs is a valuable insight into the structure of human understanding, which provides clues to discern the role of idioms in that area. The premise that these schemas are the embodied forms of knowledge structures further implies their role in the reorganization of that knowledge, as noted by Schank and Abelson above. We have already established that metaphor reorganizes knowledge. Thus, placing metaphoric processes within the frame of Schank and Abelson's theory provides us with a mechanism which initiates the analogous processing of knowledge structures.

The idiomatization which affects the linguistic metaphor is a sedimentation of the knowledge structure it employs. It, in turn becomes part of the foundation of the system, the bedrock on which further structures are built. In this manner, a phraseological unit becomes the linguistic embodiment of a **plan** and **goal**.

In the idiom открывать америку (to discover America, "to retell stale news") the idiomatic metaphor refers to a specific situation, in which a long established fact (the discovery of America) is used as the vehicle in the sarcastic derision of the target or topic domain. To discover America is, using the terminology of Vendler (1967), a telic process in which the final accomplishment or end point is eventually realized. This realization is achieved logically, since the use of the imperfective verb implies process and not end result, but history has already proved the outcome. Thus, this process and implied result implicate a theme of sorts, the entourage of actions associated (as Paivio would) with the discovery: Christopher Columbus and his voyage. The topic of the idiomatic

metaphor also implies process. Together the two processes combine to represent a particular course of action, or in this case, with the help of sarcasm, an inadvisable course of action. The associations of the idiomatic metaphor carry the weight of the goal, here the derision of such action. Thus, the associative superstructure of the idiomatic metaphor produces a pragmatic force, by implying a desirable plan of action. It is possible to use the term plan here, in the Schank and Abelson sense, since it refers to a generic course of action applicable in any situation. In this case the goal implies a certain plan of action.

In the earlier example of дразнить гусей (to tease [the] geese, see previous section) the metaphor is more neutral in its moral implications. It nonetheless represents a general plan (symbolized by the idiomatic metaphor) which implies a goal or result, that of "getting someone's goat". As plans are described as prescriptions for obtaining goals, so are idioms obviously prescriptions. The idiom каши не сваришь (you won't cook kasha [with someone], "you won't get anywhere [with someone]") implies a plan, here the cooperative procedure of cooking, through the negated result. Even the nominal phraseological unit чертова дюжина implies supernatural processes attaining the goal of evil. This idiom would most likely be used to signal such superstitious beliefs to draw attention to the number 13 and its significance. Even if used lightly or sarcastically, implied condemnation of the superstition ascribed to this idiom is in itself a goal associated with a non-religious or non-superstitious role theme.

The implication of a plan of action through the expressed goal of an idiomatic metaphor operates most efficiently in the verbal phraseological units that are presented in Chapter 1. These units all involve an action, and the procedural

implications of the plan or goal are better served where process is explicitly expressed by a verb. However, procedural implications are still present in nominal phraseological units, as noted above. E.g. казанская сирота (a Kazan orphan, "someone pretending to be impoverished or mistreated") implies a thematic performance by the feignor. The other syntactic categories of phraseological units also exhibit thematic plans, by virtue of the associations of the metaphoric idiom. For those examples where the idiom is opaque and obscure, and no longer a generative member of the system, the associations are likewise lost and obscure.

3. Contextual Integration.

The claim that idioms are the representatives of larger knowledge structures partially explicates their motivation and the subsequent facility with which they are used. In consideration of this aspect of their nature, it is necessary to describe in detail the usage of idioms in context.

When we discuss the context of idiomatic usage, we are necessarily examining the context of metaphorical usage, primarily the metaphorical associations that are outlined above. Since, as argued in Chapter 2, idioms are conventionalized symbolic forms, on one level their contextual usage does not differ substantially from that of any word.

Their meaning is already well established, the form needs only to be integrated into the larger context of a sentence. It is this process of integration into sentence meaning which provides additional information on the facility of idiomatic forms

Susan Kemper (1986) conducted a study entitled "Inferential Processing and the Comprehension of Idioms". Her study is

concerned with the integration of idioms into larger contexts and the facility of their usage compared to that of literal controls, i.e. the use of literal language instead of figurative. Her study is relevant here, since it is closely related to those cognitive advantages addressed by Paivio, noted earlier, and is a natural extension of Koen's intra-verbal associative theory of metaphor. Her research was conducted according to three hypotheses (1986: 44):

1. All target sentences should be read more rapidly in coherent, well-established texts than in incoherent ones, due to the extra processing demands of text integration.

2. Familiar idioms should be processed more rapidly than literal controls. Such an advantage would result if text integration processes are facilitated by the familiarity of the idioms.

3. Unfamiliar idioms should be processed more slowly than literal controls. This would indicate that meanings derived from figurative expressions are more difficult to integrate into a text than are meanings derived from literal expressions.

Kemper's approach to the analysis of textual organization also utilizes causal structure, particularly the causal and temporal connections of actions, physical states, and mental states. A text is underlain by these connections which may be explicitly stated or inferentially derived. Integration difficulties arise when these causal event links are disrupted. In such instances comprehension is affected. The sentence

must then be integrated into the preceeding context through inference, which slows the entire process of comprehension

Kemper's study deals with examples of English idiomatic expressions. She tested novel figurative expressions and familiar figurative expressions (idioms) for their comprehension value in various contexts. Each expression was presented in a vignette of 5 sentences, introducing one or more characters and an ordinary situation. Each was a coherent chain of events, which culminated in the target expression. A second version of each vignette was presented in which a motivating mental state was deleted, interrupting the event chain and leaving a gap. Each subject read a total of 32 vignettes in which 4 expressions were produced with the following combination of factors: literal vs. figurative target expressions, intact vs. abridged vignettes, and novel vs. familiar idioms or their literal equivalents. The comprehension value was assessed according to reading time monitored by computer. The result of her data indicated that,

> " A familiar figurative expression can be comprehended and integrated with its context significantly more rapidly than an equivalent literal expression. For figurative expressions to be comprehended more rapidly than literal ones, however, the linguistic context must be causally coherent. When the underlying chain of events is abridged by the deletion of a motivating mental state, the comprehension and integration of a familiar idiom is no more rapid than the processing of an equivalent literal expression (49).

Kemper's additional studies were conducted to examine the roles of contextual cues in the integration of novel and familiar

idioms. The results of her studies support her claim that "the problem in comprehending figurative language was accounting for the relationship between a figurative expression and its linguistic context" (53). The consistency of causal information is one factor which greatly influences the integration of idioms into a preceding context. Succeeding the integration, cues to idiomatic usage such as differences in topic and verb tense complete the successful comprehension of an idiom.

Kemper's theory of causal links supports the plausibility of Schank and Abelson's schemas. The disruption in causal information would also be a disruption of a script, plan or goal, since the mapping of these schemas is based on causal syntax. Also, if we assume that the plan of an idiom is actually encompassed in the associations of the idiomatic metaphor, these associations would very much be influenced by the linguistic context of the expression. An appropriate causal chain would reinforce the associations of the metaphor. A disruption in the context would hinder it.

Thus, metaphor continues to play a vital role within the system of idiomaticity. The cognitive processes involved in its creation are still functional within the idiom as it is conventionalized and stratified in the system of language as part of an underlying knowledge structure.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of Susan Kemper's experiments in the contextual integration of idioms indicated that idiomatic expressions prevail in communication due to their facility of usage. During speech they are quickly assembled, as they are ready-to-use formulae, but even more importantly they are as quickly dissembled and integrated into a larger discourse, if the surrounding context adequately supports the underlying plan of the idiom.

It is the claim of this thesis that the convenience of idioms is facilitated by the **knowledge structures** which they represent through **metaphoric associations.** In this manner idioms act as an agent of cognition. The idioms effectively extend or manifest the presence of these knowledge structures on the surface of language. Thus, literal language recedes into a supporting role, filling out the script, plan or goal of context.

The preliminary examination of the syntactic structure not only determined which parts of speech are grammatically occupied by phraseological units, but indicates those surface areas of language where the forms are manifest. Nominal phraseological units entail thematic metaphoric associations pertaining to individual topics or subjects. Verbal phraseological units entail associations concerning plans of action. Adjectival phraseological units also entail information pertaining to a subject or individual. Adverbial phraseological units exemplify types of actions. Verbal-propositional phraseological units combine nominal associations with action. Interjectional phraseological units operate as functional indicators. They serve as accompaniment or implicators to the underlying schema of context. The expression Вот где собака

зарыта (Here's where the dog is buried, "that's the heart of the matter") points away from itself to another topic, thus performing a deictic function.

The function and role of metaphor in language as an organizational device provide the point of departure for determining the motivational character of idioms, long after the original metaphor has undergone idiomatization. The findings of this study indicate that **dead metaphor** is incorrectly named, and that metaphoric thought is in fact regenerated from **established** metaphor (see Cooper (1986) section 2.4), and the structure it leaves behind. Thus, the process which occurs approximates a type of linguistic atrophy, whereby structures are recycled to avoid complete stagnation.

The cognitive aspects of metaphoric thought, namely the imaginal and verbal associations are outlined by Paivio, are still functional in idioms. Although idioms are considered to be equal on the syntactic level to any word, their initial figurativeness (the reason for the indivisibility of the component parts) demands that they be examined for any vestigial effects of the original metaphor. It is the conclusion of this study that these effects do exist, on the basis of the pragmatic force and persistence of these forms in language.

Previous studies in the field of idiomatic expressions, including proverbs, commonly describe them as recipes of folk wisdom and experience. It was this common conception of practicality associated with idioms and proverbs, which prompted this foray into examining additional linguistic structures which might also influence idiomaticity.

Schank and Abelson's **knowledge structures** fulfill this capacity. It is the conclusion of this thesis that Russian

phraseological units and similar idiomatic expressions represent a sub order of these knowledge structures, not subsuming, but acting as an index, or key to a schema suggested by the metaphoric associations of the idiom. Although idioms are considered conventional linguistic signs, which are readily usable, their integration into larger contexts initiates a secondary process of understanding. This secondary process activates larger conceptual systems than the semantic limits of the idiom itself.

Thus, the idiom куда Макар телят не гонял (to where Makar did not herd his calves, "very far, to the moon and back") fulfills the function of an adverbial phraseological unit, which describes an action in relation to a destination and in so doing defines distance. It is also an example of an unchanging phraseological unity, steadfast in its components. This idiom is not considered to be a phraseological fusion since it is partially transparent. The proper name of Makar is considered a common peasant name and represents a host of Makars, or at least a generic one. Also, this particular name is afflicted with associations of stupidity. Once the subject of this expression is identified the meaning becomes clear. The expression refers to those members of the peasantry which were so poor as to be forced to graze their cattle upon distant pastures. Some of the distance necessary to the practice was deliberatedly covered, while more was indeliberately covered due to the ineptitude of Makar and the additional unruliness and stupidity of his animals.

The vehicle of the above idiomatic metaphor refers to the above described agricultural practice of years gone by. The target or topic of the expression is the translated metaphorical meaning. Thus, addressing those points of metaphoric cognition

enumerated by Paivio, the following may be summarized about this example.

The idiom is still current in the Russian language due to the vividness of its imagery. The image of a hapless peasant trudging over endless miles of field, hill, and dale to pasture his herd aids in the mental storage of the idiom. The cultural specificity of this image also enables it to persist in usage today.

This expression is comprised of words which clearly draw a picture for us and create an integrated image encompassing the additional concepts of place (куда), action (гонял), object complement (телят) and intensifier (не). These components all complete the integrated image which defines the notion of distance. Furthermore, process is implied which adds intensity to the idiom. The implication of process is a byproduct of the flexibility supplied by the integrated image.

Finally, the phrase itself, the idiomatic vehicle of the expression is important to the successful interpretation of the idiom, as far as it is integrated into the accompanying context. Within metaphor the topic and vehicle are explicit within the limits of the expression. The successful interpretation of the expression is nevertheless dependent upon contextual integration. The idiom, in contrast to a novel metaphor, does not exhibit the same independence of semantic limits. It must be tied into the surrounding context, which not only sententially completes the idiom, but provides the topic for it. Therefore idioms are inexorably dependent upon contextual integration, and the verbal associations which accompany them.

Thus, the metaphoric associations of the idiom куда Макар телят не гонял are supported in context through lexical items related to the notion of travel and distance. An appropriate

context for this expression would be, Во вторник мы столько прогуляли, что пошли куда Макар телят не гонял.

The metaphorical associations of this idiom implicate historical and modern references. The social and historical plan represented by this expression has been noted above. More current is the implication of the process which accompanies such effort, and the attendent strain and fatigue it incurs. One goal in using this idiom is the solicitation of sympathy. However, the actual goal represented by the idiom is that of extreme effort and work inherent in the traversal of great distances.

Pragmatic force accompanies the idiom upon each instance of its usage. Its popular acceptance not only contributes to this effect but generates it by installing the idiom as a cultural vanguard of experience and wisdom. If it is commonly accepted, then it must be true, and it must be useful. Thus, idioms represent systems of knowledge in compact and, therefore, efficient form.

This efficiency does not exist for its own sake, but for the sake evincing power. Cassirer writes that the aesthetic inherent in metaphor (and thereby in language and myth) is present due to man's impulse toward spiritual power. Image, as a form of representation related to word sybolism *(pars pro toto*), invokes the power of the spiritual world for those who would wield it. Outside of such magical employment, the use of metaphor invokes feeling of similar proportions: the feeling of control, of being able to grasp hold of the unseen forces which connect all things (thus analogy) and thereby wield one's own power. Idioms are representative of such handholds of power. They are entrances to a greater system.

In conclusion we agree with Bolinger (quoted in Nilsen 1986: 137) that "Language is a stage built over a graveyard from which fossils rise and dance at night" (1980: 103): the fossils comprising, among others, idioms...

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